

broader scope of sanctions, potentially including some primary sanctions.

While Iran's leaders are scraping by in the resistance economy, the truth is that the whole country would be better off if the regime abandoned their enrichment and weaponization efforts and focused on providing everyday Iranians with real economic opportunity.

At the same time, Iran must also fully understand that the United States will not hesitate to take any action necessary to protect our interests and those of our allies, and that includes the use of military force where appropriate and necessary. One of our greatest strengths is our enduring security partnerships with nearly every country in the Middle East region.

Last month, a group of senior bipartisan diplomats, military officers, and former Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle issued a statement to the Washington Institute for Near East Policy about the importance of a credible military threat should Iran breach certain red lines. Let me quote from their statement. They said:

Indeed, the Vienna negotiations are in danger of becoming a cover for Iran to move toward achieving a threshold nuclear weapons capability. . . . While the United States has recognized Iran's right to civilian nuclear power, Iran's behavior continues to indicate that it not only wants to preserve a nuclear weapons option but is actively moving toward developing that capability. Indeed, as the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Association, Rafael Grossi, has stated, Iran's decision to enrich uranium to 60 percent and to produce uranium metal has no justifiable civilian purpose. . . . Without convincing Iran it will suffer severe consequences if it stays on its current path, there is little reason to hope for the success of diplomacy.

This is all from their statement.

Therefore, for the sake of our diplomatic effort to resolve this crisis, we believe it is vital to restore Iran's fear that its current nuclear path will trigger the use of force against it by the United States. The challenge is how to restore U.S. credibility in the eyes of Iran's leaders. Words—including formulations that are more pointed and direct than "all options are on the table"—are also necessary but not sufficient.

In that context, we believe it is important for the Biden administration to take steps that lead Iran to believe that persisting in its current behavior and rejecting a reasonable diplomatic resolution will put to risk its entire nuclear infrastructure, one built painstakingly over the last three decades.

Such steps may include orchestrating high-profile military exercises by the U.S. Central Command, potentially in concert with allies and partners, that simulate what would be involved in such a significant operation, including rehearsing air-to-ground attacks on hardened targets and the suppression of Iranian missile batteries.

Also important would be to provide both local allies and partners as well as U.S. installations and assets in the region with enhanced defensive capabilities to counter whatever retaliatory actions Iran might choose to make, thereby signaling our readiness to act, if necessary.

Perhaps most significantly, fulfilling past U.S. promises to act forcefully against other Iranian outrages, such as the drone attack by Iran-backed militias against the U.S. base

at al-Tanf in Syria and Iran's illegal capture of merchant ships and killing unarmed seamen, might have the salutary impact of underscoring the seriousness of U.S. commitments to act on the nuclear issue.

Again, I encourage everyone to read this statement from colleagues, congressional colleagues, military leaders, and diplomats on both sides of the aisle.

Last year, following years of quiet cooperation and the narrowing of shared security concerns, the United States and our partners and allies welcomed Israel into the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility. We have a number of shared interests—from maritime security to confronting a growing threat of ballistic missiles and UAVs—and we must continue to strengthen our bilateral and regional partnerships to ensure that we have all the means necessary to protect our interests.

Moreover, we must forcefully and proportionately respond to Iran's ongoing attacks on our diplomatic and military facilities in Iraq and Syria. We will not fail to respond against direct attacks on the United States that threaten our diplomat and service-members. Full stop.

Let me close by saying that the Iranian nuclear threat is real, and it has grown disproportionately worse by day. It is becoming a clear and present danger. The time is now to reinvigorate our multilateral sanctions efforts and pursue new avenues, new ideas, new solutions for a diplomatic resolution.

But today, I call on the Biden administration and international community to vigorously and rigorously enforce sanctions, which have proven to be among the most potent tools for impacting Iran's leaders and the IRGC. We cannot allow Iran to threaten us into a bad deal or an interim agreement that allows it to continue to build its nuclear capacity, nor should we cling to the scope of an agreement that it seems some are holding on for nostalgia's sake.

As I said 7 years ago, hope is not a national security strategy. In the words that I spoke in 2015, I said:

Whether or not the supporters of the agreement admit it, this deal is based on "hope"; hope that—when the nuclear sunset clause expires—Iran will have succumbed to the benefits of commerce and global integration . . .

Well, I hate to say, they have not.

. . . hope that the hardliners will have lost their power and the revolution will end its hegemonic goals . . .

They have not.

. . . and hope that the regime will allow the Iranian people to decide their own fate.

The hardliners are more entrenched, and they have not allowed the Iranian people to decide that future.

Hope is part of human nature, but unfortunately it is not a national security strategy. The Iranian regime, led by the Ayatollah, wants above all to preserve the regime and its Revolution—

Unlike the Green Revolution of 2009. This is still true.

So it stretches incredulity to believe they signed on to a deal that would in any way weaken the regime or threaten the goals of the Revolution.

They will not.

I understand that this deal represents a trade-off, a hope that things [might] be different in Iran in 10–15 years.

Maybe Iran will desist from its nuclear ambitions.

But it has not.

Maybe they'll stop exporting and supporting terrorism.

But it has not.

Maybe they'll stop holding innocent Americans hostage.

But they have not.

Maybe they'll stop burning American flags.

But it has not.

Maybe their leadership will stop chanting "Death to America" in the streets of Tehran.

But it has not. Or the hope was maybe that they won't do those things. Well, they have continued to do all of those things.

While there are so many crises brewing across the world, we cannot abandon our efforts to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran and the arms race it will surely set off in the Middle East. We cannot ignore Iran's nefarious support for terrorism or accept threats to American interests and lives. We must welcome legitimate and verifiably peaceful uses of nuclear power but remain true to our nonproliferation principles and our unyielding desire to build a more stable, safer, prosperous world for the American people and for all peace-loving people to thrive. In order to do so, Iran cannot and must not possess a nuclear weapon.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

#### UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S. RES. 502

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to S. Res. 502, the preamble be agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today's RECORD under "Submitted Resolutions.")

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, February 2; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Puttagunta nomination